

The University of Maine

DigitalCommons@UMaine

General University of Maine Publications

University of Maine Publications

2013

Maine Economic Improvement Fund Annual R&D Report

University Of Maine System

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.library.umaine.edu/univ_publications



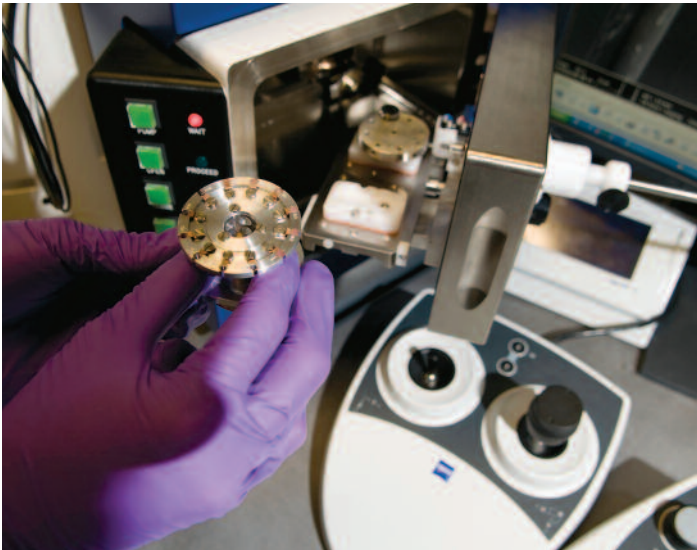
Part of the [Higher Education Commons](#), and the [History Commons](#)

This Report is brought to you for free and open access by DigitalCommons@UMaine. It has been accepted for inclusion in General University of Maine Publications by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@UMaine. For more information, please contact um.library.technical.services@maine.edu.

Maine Economic Improvement Fund

Building Maine's Economy through Research, Development and Jobs

A SUCCESSFUL PARTNERSHIP AMONG
MAINE'S PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES, GOVERNMENT AND THE PRIVATE SECTOR





Targeted Research Areas

The University of Maine System directs MEIF dollars specifically to support university-based research in the state's legislatively designated seven strategic technology areas:

- Aquaculture and Marine Sciences
- Biotechnology
- Composites and Advanced Materials Technologies
- Environmental Technologies
- Information Technologies
- Advanced Technologies for Forestry and Agriculture
- Precision Manufacturing

University-based Research Drives Economic Development

The Maine Economic Improvement Fund is a key component of Maine's science and technology plan. Since the Maine Legislature established it in 1997, MEIF has positioned the University of Maine System at the center of statewide efforts to leverage economic development through targeted investment in university-based R&D. Indicators of success show that Maine's MEIF investment is paying dividends by:

- Creating businesses and jobs, including more than 1,300 for people working on MEIF-funded projects
- Boosting Maine's economy by leveraging MEIF funds to bring federal and private-sector grants and contracts to Maine
- Building capacity and expertise to help Maine companies solve problems and commercialize innovation
- Helping commercialize patents, innovations and intellectual property
- Capitalizing on natural resources and core strengths by focusing R&D efforts on economic sectors where Maine can make real gains

University research personnel use MEIF resources to support the staff, equipment and facilities they need to successfully pursue and develop research projects.

MEIF funds often provide the required match to acquire federal or private-sector grants. MEIF money also supports equipment purchases or facilities renovations to make the universities competitive for federal grants.

MEIF increasingly fosters university partnerships with business and industry through economic development collaborations, entrepreneur training programs, business incubators, business research and other programs. These efforts lead to new Maine-based products, technologies, patents and spin-off businesses.

This document focuses specifically on MEIF-funded university work in the state's seven technology sectors. The two universities with graduate programs in some or all of those targeted research areas have received MEIF funds, with 77.6 percent to the University of Maine, 19.4 percent to the University of Southern Maine, and 3 percent to smaller campuses. In 2009, a small fund was established to promote targeted research at the other five universities.

MEIF History

One of Maine's best and most successful public investments began in 1997, when the Maine State Legislature's Joint Standing Committee on Research and Development recommended an investment approach that ultimately led to development of the Maine Economic Improvement Fund (MEIF).

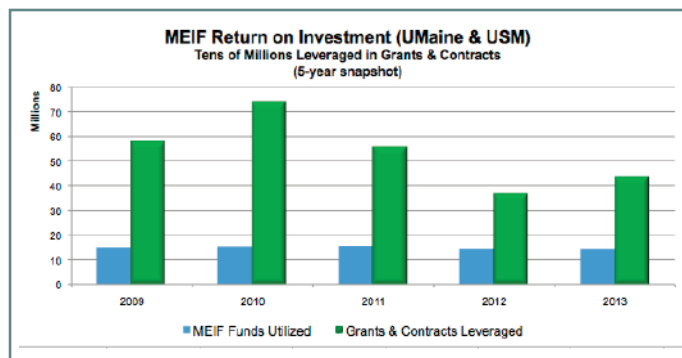
In March 1997, an Economic Improvement Strategy was created. It appropriated \$500,000 to the University of Maine System to administer investments in targeted research and development to provide the basic investment necessary to obtain matching funds and competitive grants from private and federal sources.

MEIF continues to be funded through an annual state appropriation and periodically augmented through voter-approved bond referenda. The R&D fund provides researchers at Maine's public universities with the investment necessary

to leverage federal and private sector research grants and contracts to:

- Create and sustain economic development and innovation
- Attract and retain world-class researchers
- Provide support for modern laboratories and state-of-the-art equipment
- Create new jobs, products, patents, technologies, companies and exciting opportunities in Maine

Each year, the MEIF investment in university research helps faculty and students successfully leverage tens of millions of dollars in grants and contracts.



MEIF: One of Maine's Best Investments



UMaine recently passed the \$100 million-a-year mark in grants and contracts for the first time in history — with the state's MEIF investment playing a key part of that overall research milestone.

UMaine is heavily involved in research and development, with an array of research facilities and resources on its Orono campus as well as at off-campus research sites located around the state. UMaine's extensive research infrastructure, accumulated over many decades, has enabled it to successfully pursue federal and private grants and contracts.

Since 1997, when the State of Maine made its first targeted MEIF investments, UMaine has grown its overall external grants and contracts by more than 250 percent and increased its patent portfolio and spin-off businesses by a factor of 10. Through improvements to its research infrastructure, UMaine has also increased its ability to compete for federal grants and contracts and its capacity to serve its students, as well as Maine business and industry.

For every dollar Maine invests in UMaine through MEIF, researchers have leveraged approximately four dollars from sources outside Maine making it one of the best investments the state makes.

Small Campus Initiative

In 2009, the University of Maine System created the Small Campus Initiative (SCI) to provide Maine Economic Improvement Funds to the five smaller campuses of the University of Maine System. This is a competitive award program to ensure that each university in the System has an opportunity to build and improve research infrastructure and capacity.

In FY13, per statute, \$200,000 went to Machias and Presque Isle. The MEIF Small Campus Fund is administered by the University of Maine System Office.



MEIF funding continues to be a critically important tool in USM's efforts to sustain and grow applied R&D programs relevant to Maine's economic and educational needs.

MEIF-supported projects in such areas as bioinformatics, environmental science and health, precision manufacturing, and toxicology link USM researchers to projects that can stimulate economic growth. USM's emphasis on engaging students in faculty research whenever possible also has the benefit of providing learning experiences that will help graduates drive Maine's innovation economy.



University R&D Is a Driving Force in Maine's Economy:



Photo by Edwin Remsburg, USDA



SUCCESS

By leveraging MEIF funds, in the past five years UMaine and USM have attracted more than \$250 million in federal and private-sector grants and contracts related to the seven strategic research areas. This funding directly results in Maine products and technologies such as biofuels, pulp and paper products, new potato varieties, aquaculture technologies and software which lead to improvements in Maine's industries.

RETURN ON INVESTMENT

Each year the state's MEIF appropriation is matched by tens of millions of dollars in federal and private funds for important university research. UMaine utilizes its long-established research capacity to attract the majority of these matching funds. USM continues to build its research capacity in federal and private-sector grants and contracts.

STRATEGIC IMPACT

In the MEIF's most recent five-year period, \$341 million was received to perform research and development related to the targeted areas.

CREATING JOBS

More than 1,300 full-time equivalent jobs are funded annually in Maine through the funds leveraged and expended related to MEIF. These positions include faculty, graduate assistantships, undergraduate students involved in research, and other key staff.

For more information about the University of Maine System visit:
maine.edu or call 207.973.3201